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# INFORMATION REPORT

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 SUBJECT 1. Rakvere Airfield  
 2. Parachute Division at Rakvere

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1. Rakvere airfield (59°22'N/20°33'E) was located 300 to 400 meters north of Rakvere railroad station. The southern airfield boundary was parallel to the railroad line. The airfield bordered a wooded area to the north and northwest. There were flat meadows to the east as far as the railroad line to Kunda (59°30'N/20°33'E). The field covered an area of about 1,500x1,200 meters. The landing field, which was about 1,200x800 meters, was covered by a firm turf, appeared to be partially drained, and was serviceable throughout the year. Surfaced runways or taxiways were not available. About 40 aircraft revetments, about 20 meters apart and surrounded on three sides by earth walls about 3.5 meters high and with bushes, were available in the northeastern and northwestern corners of the installation. Each of the revetments were covered by camouflage nets. Three destroyed hangars, two of which were covered by roofs, were observed in the southwestern portion of the field. A damaged building, about 50x15 meters, on the southern edge of the installation, allegedly was the former flight control building. No other buildings were seen at the field. Two semi-underground fuel containers were observed next to the destroyed hangar. These containers appeared to be unused. The aircraft refueled from tank trucks. Bombs and ammunition were stored in a wooded area in the northern and northwestern edges of the field. Lighting facilities for landing at night were probably available. Balloons were being released near the hangars.
2. About 80 IL-2 ground attack aircraft were stationed at the field. The unit was replaced by other ground attack units several times. The last replacement occurred about May 1948 when a unit which had allegedly previously been located in East Prussia was transferred there.
3. Flying was intensive regardless of the type of weather. Individual take-offs and groups of up to 10 planes were practiced. Bombing was practiced over a bomb range near Kunda and at sea targets. Commercial aircraft operating on the Leningrad-Tallinn (59°27'N/24°50'E) line landed daily at the field.
4. The flying and ground personnel stationed at the field were quartered in town between the railroad station and Narva-Ten, which had been evacuated by civilians. Work shops and garages were also in this quartering area, about 250 meters southwest of the railroad station. Aviation gasoline arrived by rail and was shipped to a fuel depot, located in a tank barracks in Rakvere, by 10 to 12 air force tank trucks. A radio installation with four masts was observed in two houses in the

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southern edge of the town about 3 km north of the field.

5. During the period from the spring of 1948 to early May 1949, [redacted] the following information from Soviet parachutists concerning a parachute division transferred from Wiener-Neustadt to the Rakvere area: Battalions of this division had the strength of 300 to 350 men and were quartered in the Ulvi Castle. They were later transferred to a cantonment in a wooded area 4 or 5 km north of Ulvi near Nornize (59°20'N/26°38'E), in the Vake-Maarya (59°06'N/26°17'E) area, about 3 km north of Rakvere airfield, in a cantonment located in a woods between Kunda and Nigula (59°27'N/26°43'E), and in a cantonment located in another wooded area near Palmze (59°29'N/26°0'E). The division headquarters was in Rakvere on a side street branching off from Pikk-Ten. The battalions were commanded by majors or lieutenant colonels. The division commander was allegedly a young general. The number of officers serving with this unit, was usually high. Each squad seemed to be led by a junior lieutenant. The soldiers of the unit appeared [redacted] to be well disciplined. The overall average age of the EM was 22 to 24 years and had served for at least 18 months.

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6. The parachutists wore khaki blouses that extended to the knees and which could be buttoned between the legs. The collar of the blouses was open and pointed. The blouse had two large breast pockets. Two pockets larger than German ammunition pouches were worn on a web belt, another pocket was on the back. The parachute was carried on a pack frame. Sledge-type trousers, wrapped leggings, and leather-lined cloth shoes were also worn. The steel helmet worn by the parachutists had no rim and seemed to be well padded. Stars serving as tank insignia were fitted on collars. Epuletts were not observed. Leather suits were worn only by a few officers. EM allegedly wore them only if they had to jump from high altitudes. The leather suits had the same cut as the cloth suits, but were fitted with zippers instead of buttons. The dress uniforms had a white parachute design on a piece of cloth on the arm. Most of the soldiers were equipped with short rifles and all had a short spade which could also be used as a pickaxe.
7. Parachuting was mostly done at battalion level from five or six twin-engine transports probably stationed in Tallinn. About 20 parachutists with weapons and equipment were loaded in one plane. The parachuting was mostly conducted from an altitude from 300 to 350 meters and occasionally from high altitudes. The parachutists jumped in quick succession. Four to six containers with weapons and equipment were also dropped from each plane. The parachutists allowed themselves to fall about one-third of the altitude before the parachute opened. After landing field training was conducted occasionally together with two or three tanks. Subsequently the parachute squadrons marched back in file to the take-off point. Six or seven jumps were made from five or six planes in the course of one day. During these exercises two or three ambulances were seen at the field. During maneuvers in the fall of 1948 five or six cargo gliders which, according to other PWs were carrying heavy arms including a small tank and AT guns, were seen in the area east of Rakvere.

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